

Message Text

SECRET

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46

ACTION SS-25

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O P 101300Z NOV 75
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6941
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN PRIORITY

S E C R E T RABAT 5440

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, MO, SP, SS

SUBJECT: SPANISH SAHARA; AFTERMATH OF KING'S PULLBACK ON SAHARA MARCH

REF: RABAT 5432

1. BOTH MOROCCAN AND SPANISH CONTACTS HERE CONTINUE TO KEEP TIGHT LID ON NATURE OF SPANISH-MOROCCAN UNDERSTANDING ACHIEVED THUS FAR ON SAHARA. SPANISH AMBASSADOR TOLD ME MORNING NOVEMBER 10 THAT HE COULD NOT GIVE ME ANY DETAILS AS YET, BUT EXPECTED DEVELOPMENTS IN NEXT DAY OR TWO WHICH WOULD ENABLE HIM TO DO SO. HE RATED SPANISH CABINET WAS MEETING AT THAT TIME. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION ABOUT RUMOR THAT SPAIN WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE RIGHT AFTER KING'S SPEECH BUT DID NOT, HE DENIED THIS REPORT, CALLING IT AN "AFP CANARD". HE STATED THAT A MADRID RADIO EDITORIAL COMMENTARY OF NOVEMBER 9 WAS MOST OFFICIAL PUBLIC STATEMENT OF SPANISH VIEWS THUS FAR. (IT EXPRESSED PLEASURE WITH KING'S DECISION TO PULL BACK MARCH AND CHARACTERIZED THIS AS REFLECTING CLEAR SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY OF KING. FBIS LONDON 092251Z NOV). WE NOTE BBC NEWS REPORT MID-DAY NOVEMBER 10 THAT MOROCCAN DELEGATION WILL PROCEED TO MADRID WITH NEXT
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48 HOURS.

2. COMMENT: IT IS OF COURSE STILL EARLY TO ATTEMPT DEFINITIVE ANALYSIS, BUT TREND IN MOROCCAN-SPANISH NEGOTIATIONS APPEARS HIGHLY POSITIVE. AT SAME TIME, HOWEVER, TENSIONS BETWEEN MOROCCO AND ALGERIA APPEAR TO REMAIN VERY HIGH, TO JUDGE FROM NOVEMBER 10 ALGIERS RADIO REPORT OF CONTINUED CLASHES IN EASTERN PORTION OF SAHARA BETWEEN MOROCCAN FORCES AND F POLISARIO (FBIS LONDON 100925Z NOV). WE WOULD ASSUME THAT ALGERIAN UNHAPPINESS WILL INCREASE IN PROPORTION TO MOROCCAN-SPANISH ENTENTE. ALGERIANS ALSO SEEMS TO BE UNDERTAKING MAJOR DIPLOMATIC EFFORT WITH MAURITANIANS, AS REFLECTED IN OULD DADDAH'S REPORTED PRESENCE IN ALGIERS NOVEMBER 10 FOLLOWING VISIT BY ALGERIAN EMISSARY IN NOUAKCHOTT. FONMIN LARAKI REPORTEDLY WENT TO NOUAKCHOTT NOVEMBER 9 IN WHAT MAY HAVE BEEN EFFORT TO KEEP MAURITANIANS IN STEP WITH MOROCCAN-SPANISH UNDERSTANDING. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT LARAKI ENCOURAGED HIGH LEVEL MAURITANIAN INTERVENTION WITH ALGERIA TO EASE MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN TENSIONS.

3. WHETHER THERE WILL BE FURTHER REQUESTS FOR US DIPLOMATIC INTERVENTION IN SAHARA ISSUE IS AN OPEN QUESTION. IF MOROCCAN-SPANISH TALKS PRESENT DIFFICULTIES, KING MAY WELL PERCEIVE NEED FOR US HELP. IN SUCH A CASE, HE WOULD BE IN POSITION TO ARGUE THAT MOROCCO BOWED TO DESIRE OF UN AND US TO AVOID CONFRONTATION IN SAHARA AND INSTEAD CHOSE TO PURSUE DIPLOMATIC TRACK.

4. A MOROCCAN REQUEST FOR US OR US/USSR ASSISTANCE IN CALMING MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN TENSIONS SEEMS MUCH LESS LIKELY AT THIS TIME, ALTHOUGH COMMUNIST LEADER ALI YATA'S DEMARCHE TO ME NOVEMBER 9 SUGGESTING A COORDINATED US/SOVIET EFFORT ALONG THESE LINES (RABAT 5431) MAY POSSIBLY HAVE HAD SOME ROYAL INSPIRATION.
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